

# POSTHARVEST LOSS ASSESSMENT OF GREEN BANANAS IN RWANDA – BRIEF

Green bananas are a main staple crop in Rwanda, with widespread cultivation, consumption and cultural acceptance. To understand the postharvest losses in the green banana value chain, the project conducted three types of analysis – Value Chain Analysis, Commodity Systems Assessment Methodology (CSAM) and Environmental Lifecycle Analysis.

## Causes of Postharvest Losses in Photos






### Green Banana losses

FROM FARM TO MARKET IN RWANDA



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## Summary of postharvest losses and quality problems

 Farmer Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Harvesting practices are rough and cause damage to the produce</li> </ul>
 Temperature Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bananas are exposed to the sun during transport and marketing, and there are no cold chains or cool storage facilities for bananas,</li> </ul>
 Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cooking bananas are transported as bunches, and are handled roughly, leading to various losses along the chain</li> <li>Bicycles and trucks are overloaded for the transport of produce for long distances.</li> </ul>
 Farmer Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Farmer cooperatives are not properly organized, which has led to lack of bargaining power for selling their produce to traders</li> </ul>
 Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are limited processing options for cooking bananas, and poor-quality packaging.</li> </ul>

## Recommendations for Reducing Postharvest Losses

1	<p><b>Training of trainers (capacity building)</b> in improved cooking banana handling on the farm. Leaders of cooperatives involved in cooking banana production should be trained in harvest indices, apply appropriate postharvest handling techniques, use of improved containers, sorting and grading systems, use of shade during harvesting and postharvesting steps, etc.</p>
2	<p><b>Training on methods of improved transport</b> for cooking bananas. Training on use of potential low-cost transport options including tricycles, bicycle trailers, and covered cargo bicycles, etc..</p>
3	<p><b>Demonstrations that are recommended for the Postharvest Training and Services Centers</b> on cost effective practices for reducing postharvest losses in cooking bananas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maturity indices, quality and shelf life</li> <li>Improved, gentle harvesting practices</li> <li>Use of shade (various types of simple, low cost structures and portable shade such as market umbrellas)</li> <li>Use of improved containers for transport and marketing</li> <li>Use of tricycles or bicycle trailers for improved local transport</li> <li>Zero Energy Cool Chamber</li> <li>Small-scale cooking banana processing methods</li> </ul>
4	<p><b>Postharvest agri-business opportunities for cooking bananas should be promoted.</b> These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trader/grower partnerships, where improved banana production, harvest practices and postharvest handling on the farm leads to increased profits for both the growers and the traders.</li> <li>Local manufacture of cooking banana flour (with flavors/dried vegetable mixes, package sizes, types and prices targeted to local consumer preferences).</li> </ul>

